

BIODIVERSITY ALONG THE BORDER

CALIFORNIA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL'S TOUR OF TIJUANA, BAJA CALIFORNIA

WEDNESDAY, September 27, 2006

- 8:30 a.m. Board Buses** at the Coronado Community Center. **Crystal Crawford and Patricia McCoy** will welcome the attendees and serve as MC for the day.
- 8:45 a.m. Depart to Otay Mesa**
The border area of Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay has been identified as the area of opportunity to implement effective binational planning with Tijuana. **Thomas Oberbauer**, Chief, MSCP Division, County of San Diego and **Jerre Stallcup**, Conservation Ecologist, Conservation Biology Institute, will give an overview of biodiversity and natural resources of southern San Diego County and the County's efforts to preserve those resources. Then, Tom and **Glenn Russell**, Chief of Planning, County of San Diego, will summarize the growth challenges facing the border and development plans for East Otay Mesa.
- 9:15 a.m. Visit the Otay Mesa Border (Airway Drive)**
At this stop we will view the international border, Otay Mesa, and the proposed site for the new East Otay Mesa –Otay II port of Entry, which will be discussed in detail at the CBC meeting on Thursday. We will also view the Otay Mountain Wilderness Area, owned and managed by the Bureau of Land Management, a key contribution to the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP). From this vantage point we will be able to see the border fence and the new development of Eastern Tijuana. We will hear from **Laura Silvan** from the Binational Watershed Advisory Council and the Border Environmental Education Project on growth issues and environmental protection challenges in Baja California. We will then hear from **Clay Howe**, Fire Management Specialist, Bureau of Land Management, about the Cross Border Fire Prevention Council on their bi-national fire-fighting efforts.
- 10:50 a.m. Crossing to Tijuana through the Otay Mesa Port of Entry**
This is the largest commercial border crossing between California and Mexico. In 2005 it handled more than \$24.4 billion in imports and exports, and almost 1.5 million trucks crossed in both directions.
- 11:10 a.m. Arrive at toll booth – Restroom break – Travel through the Tijuana-Tecate Toll Road**
While traveling along the toll road we will receive a presentation on the Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative from **Miguel Angel Vargas Tellez**, Programa de Conservación de Tierras Privadas, Coordinador Region Noroeste, **Fernando Ochoa**, Coordinador Juridico, Pronatura Noroeste, Programa de Conservación de Tierras, **Jerre Stallcup**, Conservation Ecologist, Conservation Biology Institute, and **Kathy Viatella**, Project Director, The Nature Conservancy. We will pass through an area that supports some of the last remaining intact patches of coastal sage scrub, chaparral communities, riparian areas, and vernal

pools. Elevations in this area range from 500 feet to over 3,000 feet at the tops of Otay Mountain, Tecate Peak, and Cerro San Isidro. This area supports many sensitive and endemic plant species, the California gnatcatcher, coastal cactus wrens, and the Quino checkerspot butterfly. Rapid development along the border threatens to further fragment this region and endanger many sensitive species, including some that occur nowhere else on Earth. We will hear about how Pronatura, The Nature Conservancy and Conservation Biology Institute are working together to protect this incredible biodiversity.

12:05 p.m. Travel through City of Tijuana to Los Laureles Canyon – (*Lunch on bus*)
Haydee Martinez, Regional Planner, Instituto Municipal de Planeación (IMPlan - The City of Tijuana's Municipal Planning Institute), and **Delia Castellanos**, Environmental Planner, IMPLAN, will join us on the bus to provide highlights of various planning and conservation activities as we travel through the City of Tijuana to Los Laureles Canyon.

12:45 p.m. Arrive Pemex Station for a restroom break

1:25 p.m. Arrive Los Laureles Canyon
After driving from the lower section of Smugglers Gulch/Matadero Canyon to the upper section of the Matadero sub-basin, we will then turn towards the upper reaches of the Los Laureles sub-basin, to an area known as San Bernardo (a legal development that has been the site of various binational planning and conservation activities). There, City of Tijuana officials will dedicate a community park to the residents of Los Laureles. After the park dedication, **Oscar Romo**, Coordinator, Coastal Training Program, Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve will describe the pervious paver project for a neighborhood street and a school plaza. These blocks were designed and constructed by the residents of Los Laureles Canyon in an effort to effectively manage storm-water and control erosion. Lastly, we will view the area where 40 model homes will be built that utilize sustainable design principles, developed from a project with the Iberoamerican University of Tijuana Architecture Department.

3:00 p.m. Arrive at Border State Park (restrooms available)
We will drive to Monument Mesa at Border Field State Park. At the border fence we will view what at one time was an international park, and view the southern half of the estuary. **Clay Phillips**, Manager, Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve and Superintendent, California State Parks will discuss the importance of the estuary, the sediment issues and the restoration actions being considered. Then we'll drive to the Goat Canyon Sediment Basin to discuss the challenges of managing both sediment and trash.

5:00 p.m. Arrive at Coronado Community Center